

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL / THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH / 815 SECOND AVENUE / NEW YORK, N.Y. 10017

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EPISCOPAL CURSILLO
SEMINAR DRAWS 200

ATLANTA -- More than 200 participants attended a national Episcopal Cursillo Seminar here in late October, representing 54 of the dioceses of the Church, from Hawaii to Panama, as well as jurisdictions in the continental U.S.

Sponsored by the National Episcopal Cursillo Committee, the seminar was devoted primarily to learning and sharing the Cursillo method. Known formally as "Cursillos de Christianidad" ("little courses in Christianity"), the movement was begun in Spain in the early 1950s by a Roman Catholic bishop and was introduced in the U.S. in the late 1950s. The Cursillo, a weekend retreat, is designed to produce a renewed commitment to Christ and to help the individual witness to the Christian faith in the world in which he lives.

Bishop James B. Brown of the Diocese of Louisiana, in an address at the seminar, said, "We read that there are 80 million unchurched. How many more are baptized unbelievers? We need these things held up before us. . . . In the Episcopal Church we don't study moral problems from the standpoint of moral solution but rather we solve problems in a managerial way. . . ."

"There's never been a renewal movement that hasn't been old," he continued. "The pietistic movement within the German Church provided a method. . . . Movements need challenge. The Church needs to live the life of grace. . . . We forget what it's all about. We face the danger of being legalistic or of dispensing 'cheap grace'. . . ."

"Cursillo aims to make those who are natural leaders step out and penetrate the world for Christ," he said.

Another speaker was Gerry Hughes, executive director of the Roman Catholic Cursillo Movement, who told the Episcopalians, "It took eight years for the Roman Catholic Church to form a national Cursillo secretariat and it only took you four."

"Many lay people do not see their calling as one of applying Christian principles," he said. "The purpose of Cursillo is tied in with the mission of the laity to transform the world."

Glenn Ingraham from the Diocese of Central New York was also a leader in the seminar.

Six workshops or sharing centers dealt with basic Cursillo information: pre-Cursillo, post-Cursillo, Cursillo music, ecumenical Cursillos, coed/traditional Cursillos, and local secretariat by-laws.

The participants approved the setting up of a permanent structure and by-laws. The group favored adherence to the original guidelines of Bishop Jan Hervas of Mallorca, the founder of the movement.

A Cursillo begins on a Thursday night and ends on a Sunday night, with each limited to 35 or 40 persons. The traditional retreat is not coeducational. Emphasis at the retreats is on "living the Christian life in grace." The movement is largely lay-directed.

Ray Jorgenson of Wayzata, Minn., is chairman of the National Episcopal Cursillo Committee and coordinators of the seminar were William and Barbara Selby of Decatur, Ga.

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PICTURE CAPTION

79354 Bishop Bennett J. Sims of Atlanta, at the microphone, welcomes the 200 participants at the national Episcopal Cursillo Seminar in Atlanta, Oct. 25-27. At his left are Bishop James B. Brown of Louisiana and the Rev. Charles Roper of Columbus, Ga. Two unidentified musicians from the Diocese of Atlanta are at the right. (Photo: Ann Thomas).

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